

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: David Marin
(202) 225-5074

**Government Reform Committee Members Question
Wisdom of California Lawn Mower Emission Standards**
Firefighter Concerns Ignored

Washington, D.C. – House Government Reform Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA) joined four other committee members in sending a letter yesterday to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) expressing concern that the California Air Resources Board (CARB) plans to issue lawn mower emission standards that could result in substantial safety and fire hazards to California citizens.

The final rule requiring new emission standards for “small non-road engines” is expected today from the California Air Resources Board (CARB). The Committee’s understanding is that the rule fails to address serious concerns raised by fire officials around the country – specifically, that the standards would require hot catalysts and high fuel pressure level standards that can result in contact burns, ignition of grass clippings and turf, melting or igniting of fuel, and muffler ignition. As a result, the lawn and garden industry could be forced to manufacture a dangerous product if the rule is implemented.

Davis was joined on the letter by Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs Chairman Doug Ose, and Reps. Edward Schrock, John Duncan, and Marsha Blackburn. The Government Reform Committee is responsible for EPA oversight; if the Governor of California approves the CARB rule, CARB will submit to EPA a “request for authorization.”

“While we welcome California’s efforts to improve air quality, we have great concerns about the impact unsafe lawn and garden equipment could have on California’s citizens, businesses and environment...By attempting to promulgate this rule without taking into account the repeated concerns about safety expressed by firefighting professionals and engine manufacturers, California is choosing a policy that favors air quality over human safety,” the members wrote. “Moreover, the rule ignores the damage

to air quality and the environment caused by the wildfires that would potentially ignite under the dry conditions found in much of California.”

A copy of the letter is attached.

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